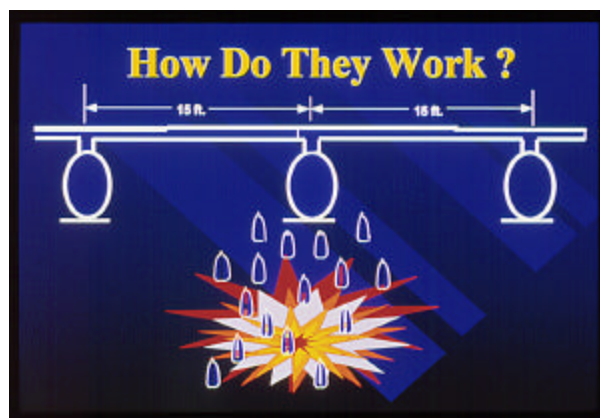


HOME FIRE SPRINKLERS

WHY?

- 4 out of 5 people who die in fires, die at home (where they feel the safest).
 - Sprinklers and Alarms together cut your risk of dying by 82%.
 - They are inexpensive to install in new and existing buildings.
 - Home sprinklers are less obtrusive than commercial types.
 - Some home sprinklers can be nearly invisible.
 - They reduce the damage of a house fire on average 90%.
 - Both plumbers and sprinkler fitters can install home sprinkler systems.
 - Home sprinklers greatly minimize water damage in the event of a fire.
 - There is only a 1 in 16 million per year chance of accidental discharge.
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- The system can be installed as a set of pipes separate from your existing household plumbing or it can be added to your plumbing. The two systems are called “Stand Alone” and “Combination” systems respectively.



Home sprinkler systems are designed for life safety. In the event of a fire, when the sprinkler head closest to the flames reaches 165 degrees, a single head activates to put out the fire in its beginning stages. Statistically, over 90% of the time the fire is stopped or controlled by just one sprinkler head.

An average of 10 to 26 gallons of water a minute flows from one sprinkler head. Because the sprinkler head activates quickly, while the fire is still small, the water damage is much less than what you would normally see from a fire department response.

Stand Alone System:

This type of system is completely separate from your domestic supply. It is very similar to what you might see in a business. The water source can be at the meter base or where your water main enters your house and requires a “flow alarm” that sounds an alarm if water moves through the pipe. A disadvantage is that this system often uses a different type of pipe than normal plumbing.

Because the water never moves unless the sprinkler head activates, it can become contaminated. Therefore, a “double check valve” is required to keep the water from flowing back and contaminating your drinking water. This system also requires a yearly inspection of the check valve and flow alarm operation.

An advantage to this system is that a separate set of pipes is dedicated solely to the sprinklers. You also need to be aware of the sprinkler heads themselves. Because they are made to function at a certain temperature, painting or coating them with anything will act like insulation or glue and they may not work when you need them. Certain parts of a sprinkler head can also be fragile. You need to avoid using them as hangers for plants, decorations, or anything that could put stress on the glass bulb that holds the plug in place.

Combination System:

This type of system is commonly called a “multi-purpose” system. The major difference with this type is its integration into your domestic plumbing system. The water actually flows through the plumbing pipes and the sprinkler system, which keeps it fresh and eliminates any need for a double check valve. These systems may also be installed without a flow alarm as long as you maintain adequate smoke alarms.

There are a number of advantages to this type of system. Because there is no double check valve or flow alarm, they are not required to have a yearly inspection. These systems use a single shut off control for the domestic water and the sprinkler system. This eliminates the chance that the sprinkler system can be accidentally shut off without the homeowner’s knowledge. Because this type of sprinkler system uses normal plumbing pipe and less specialized equipment, it is less expensive to install.

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW AFTER YOU HAVE SPRINKLERS.

For a fire sprinkler system to work properly there has to be enough water pressure. Once you have had your system installed you need to pay particular attention to any changes you make to your plumbing system.

For example, if you have a combination system and decide to install a water softener or purification filter, they should be installed at the faucet as opposed to where your water comes into the house. These devices can seriously reduce your overall water pressure. If you need to add a water softener that will effect your entire plumbing system it should be done in a way to bypass the sprinkler system.

Be aware of anything you add to your home that might get in the way of the sprinkler head if there is a fire. Examples might be a hanging cabinet or ceiling fan.

Another thing you should watch out for is changing the coverage area the sprinkler head serves. If you change or enlarge a room it may be necessary to add an additional or change the location of the sprinkler head in that room; since the pipe is already there, this is a simple process.

The last critical issue has to do with **smoke alarms**. It is possible for a smoldering fire to produce enough toxic smoke to be fatal before a sprinkler head releases. One does not replace the need for the other. You will reduce your chances of losing someone in a fire by 82%, by having both sprinklers and smoke alarms in your home. Damage to your home will be reduced by 90%.

If you have questions about home fire sprinklers, or how to find a qualified installer, please feel free to call 979-764-3705

Hyperlink to Home Fire Sprinkler Coalition, www.homefiresprinklers.com